CLAIMS

1. A method for operating a computing device during an initial first boot sequence, comprising:

prompting a user to enter a zip code;

determining corresponding configuration information from the zip code; and

using the configuration information to configure the computing device.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the prompting comprises presenting a graphical user interface that requests the user to enter the zip code.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the determining comprises looking up the configuration information in a data structure.

4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the determining comprises querying a local database to lookup the configuration information.

5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the determining comprises:

passing the zip code over a network to a remote site, the remote site having a database that correlates the zip code and corresponding configuration information;

querying the database at the remote site using the zip code to lookup the corresponding configuration information; and

returning the configuration information from the remote site.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising populating data fields with the configuration information.

7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the configuration information includes a time setting, and the using the configuration information comprises automatically configuring the time / date parameters of the computing device with the time setting.

8. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the configuration information includes a city name and a state name, and the using the configuration information comprises automatically configuring the city and state names for the computing device.

9. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the configuration information includes a telephone area code, and the using the configuration information comprises automatically configuring the telephone area code for the computing device.

SUB A1

10. A method for operating a computing device, comprising:

receiving a zip code;

looking up corresponding configuration information based on the zip code; and

populating data fields used to configure the computing device with the configuration information.

11. A method as recited in claim 10, further comprising presenting the configuration information to a user and prompting the user to confirm accuracy of the configuration information.

12. A method as recited in claim 10, further comprising configuring the computing device using the configuration information.

13. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the configuration information includes a time setting, and further comprising automatically configuring the time / date parameters of the computing device with the time setting.

14. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the configuration information includes a city name and a state name, and further comprising automatically filling in data fields holding the city name and the state name.

15. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the configuration information includes a telephone area code, and further comprising automatically filling in a data field holding the telephone area code.

SUB A27 **16.** A method for operating a computing device, comprising:

receiving a zip code;

establishing a connection to a remote database server, the database server correlating zip codes with corresponding configuration information;

passing the zip code to the database server;

looking up the corresponding configuration information correlated with the zip code at the database server;

returning the configuration information from the database server to the computing device;

storing the zip code at the computing device;

populating data fields used to configure the computing device with the configuration information; and

prompting the user to confirm accuracy of the configuration information.

17. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein the establishing comprises connecting to the remote database server over the Internet.

18. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein the establishing comprises connecting to the remote database server over a wireless network.

19. A method as recited in claim 16, further comprising configuring the computing device using the configuration information.

20. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein the configuration information includes a time setting, and further comprising automatically configuring the time / date parameters of the computing device with the time setting.

21. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein the configuration information includes a city name and a state name, and further comprising automatically filling in data fields holding the city name and the state name.

22. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein the configuration information includes a telephone area code, and further comprising automatically filling in a data field holding the telephone area code.

SUB A37

23. A system comprising:

a computing device;

a zip code database that correlates zip codes and corresponding configuration information; and

the computing device prompting a user to enter a zip code and using the zip code to look up the corresponding configuration information in the zip code database.

24. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the computing device has a screen and presents a graphical user interface on the screen to prompt the user to enter the zip code.

25. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the zip code database resides at the computing device.

26. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the zip code database is remote from the computing device.

27. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the zip code database is remote from the computing device, and the computing device passes the zip code over a network to the remote zip code database where the zip code is used to query the zip code database to lookup the corresponding configuration information.

28. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the computing device populates data fields used in configuring the computing device with the configuration information.

29. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the configuration information includes a time setting, and the computing device automatically configures the time / date parameters with the time setting.

30. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the configuration information includes a city name and a state name, and the computing device automatically configures the city and state names.

31. A system as recited in claim 23, wherein the configuration information includes a telephone area code, and the computing device automatically configures the telephone area code for the computing device.

SUB A4

32. A system comprising:

a portable computing device having a processor, memory, a small-area screen, a data entry mechanism, and a transceiver for data communication;

a zip code database server remote from the portable computing device, the zip code database server correlating zip codes with corresponding configuration information; and

the computing device prompting a user to enter a zip code;

the computing device establishing a data connection with the zip code database server and sending the zip code from the transceiver to the zip code database server;

the zip code database server determining the corresponding configuration information from the zip code and returning the configuration information back to the computing device; and

the computing device storing the configuration information in the memory.

33. A system as recited in claim 32, wherein the computing device populates data fields used in configuring the computing device with the configuration information.

34. A system as recited in claim 32, wherein the configuration information includes a time setting, and the computing device automatically configures the time / date parameters with the time setting.

35. A system as recited in claim 32, wherein the configuration information includes a city name and a state name, and the computing device automatically configures the city and state names.

36. A system as recited in claim 32, wherein the configuration information includes a telephone area code, and the computing device automatically configures the telephone area code for the computing device.

SUB A5

37. One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions for:

receiving a user-entered zip code; and

determining corresponding configuration information from the zip code that can be used to configure a computing device.

38. One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 37, further comprising computer-executable instructions for configuring the computing device using the configuration information.

39. One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 37, further comprising computer-executable instructions for populating data fields used to configure the computing device with the configuration information.

40. One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 37, wherein the configuration information includes a time setting, and further comprising computer-executable instructions for automatically configuring the time / date parameters with the time setting.

41. One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 37, wherein the configuration information includes a city name and a state name, and further comprising computer-executable instructions for automatically configuring the city and state names.

42. One or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 37, wherein the configuration information includes a telephone area code, and further comprising computer-executable instructions for automatically configuring the telephone area code for the computing device.